also been taken. MIS will be launched on a specific request from the State/Union Territory Government and the profit/losses incurred, if any, in these operations will be shared by the Central Government and the concerned State/UnionTerritory Government on 50:50 basis. Arecanut has been procured by the Government of Goa under MIS during the year 2001-2002.

Export of Natural Rubber

2919. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to increase the export of natural rubber; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) Yes; Sir. In addition to the on-going efforts to boost the export of Natural Rubber through various promotional measures, Government has recently approved a scheme for export promotion of Natural Rubber. The Scheme *inter-alia* provides for financial incentives to exporters of Natural Rubber for quality improvement, certification, packaging and transportation.

Tea Export

2920. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that tea export of the country has plummeted by 7.18 million kgs. in the first seven months of the current year in comparison to previous year;

(b) if so,the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to increase the manufacture of orthodox tea in the country keeping in view the fact that majority of tea consuming countries prefer orthodox tea to CTC tea?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI):

(a) Yes, sir. there has been a decline in export of tea inquantity and value terms during the first seven months *viz.* January-July, 2001 compared to the corresponding period last year. The details of export of tea are given below:—

(Qty. in Mn. kgs.*)
(Value in Rs. Crore*)

Period	2001		2000		inc. (+) or Dec.(−) in 2001 over 2000	
	Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value
Jan-July	97.99	892.34	105.17	956.90	−7.18	−64.56

*Estimated

(b) The main reasons accounting for decline in export of tea include higher import duty on tea imposed by various countires like Russian Federation and Egypt, ban on import of tea into Iran, stiff competition from other exporting countries such as Sri Lanka, Kenya, Indonesia, China and Vietnam and setback in countries like UK, Poland, Iraq, Libya and Turkey.

(c) Government/Tea Board has implemented various developmental schemes under which financial assistance is provided to the growers for increasing production and productivity of tea in the country including orthodox tea. In addition, Government has recently approved an exclusive scheme for rapid conversion of bought leaf factories, currently engaged in production of CTC tea into dual or orthodox tea manufacturing units.